

MASSACHUSETTS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Mass Workforce Issuance

Workforce Issuance No. 06-79

☐ Policy ☒ Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
Workforce Investment Board Chairs
Workforce Investment Board Directors
Title I Administrators
Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
DCS Associate Directors
DCS Field Managers

cc: WIA State Partners

From: Jane C. Edmonds, Director
Department of Workforce Development

Susan V. Lawler, Director
Division of Career Services

Linda Rohrer, Acting President
Commonwealth Corporation

Date: December 1, 2006

Subject: “Bridging the Opportunity Gap” Request For Proposals

Purpose: To distribute “Bridging the Opportunity Gap: Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job Readiness and Employment Program” (formerly EET) Request For Proposals (RFP).

Background: The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA) released Training & Employment and Guidance Letter No. 03-04 in July 2004 announcing ETA’s “New Strategic Vision for Youth Services”. Among the key strategies is a focus on the neediest youth, including youth involved with the juvenile justice system. Simultaneously, Massachusetts state agencies serving youth began a process to look at service connections for youth across systems, called *Pathways to Success by 21* (P21). To that end, in January 2005 Commonwealth Corporation and DYS co-sponsored, as part of the Title I Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Forum series, a DYS-WIA forum that

highlighted several of the promising practices in the Commonwealth that connect youth involved with the juvenile justice system to the Massachusetts workforce system.

In 2005 representatives from the Governor's Office of Administration and Finance (A&F), Department of Youth Services (DYS), Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and Commonwealth Corporation convened a group of Workforce Boards and One-Stop Career Center partners and other workforce development managers to discuss a proposed program model to connect DYS youth with employment and training, at the time a concept referred to as "Employment, Education & Training" (EET). Conceptually, EET was an effort to increase the connection of DYS youth to the workforce system. On October 27, 2006 the DWD re-convened a group of Career Center and LWIB leaders in Worcester, MA to provide an update on the progress of DYS funding for employment and training activities and to receive feedback with respect to various models to partner DYS and the workforce system. Since that time, funding and a new functional name for the project was established, "Bridging the Opportunity Gap: Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job Readiness and Employment Program". The feedback from the focus group meeting in Worcester was incorporated into the new RFP by the DYS leadership.

Action

Required: Please find attached the "Bridging the Opportunity Gap: Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job Readiness and Employment Program" Request for Proposals and accompanying memo. Please review and disseminate to your local youth network.

Grants awarded with respect to the RFP will provide funding for personal motivation, career readiness and pre-employment training services for youth involved in the Department of Youth Services Community Re-entry Centers. Interested parties should review the application guidelines and consider submitting a proposal to the Commonwealth Corporation. Proposals are due on Wednesday, December 20th (5:00 p.m.). A total of approximately \$300,000 will be awarded and it is anticipated that four or five grants will be made with a range between \$40,000 and \$60,000 each.

Inquiries: Any questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Janet Daisley, Senior Program Manager at Commonwealth Corporation (jdaisley@commcorp.org) or 413-582-9054 ext. 107.

Attachments: Attachment A: [RFP Memo](#)
Attachment B: [Request for Proposals](#)